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Dear Ms. Wilkerson,

Unfortunately I find myself taking time from a much needed vacation to respond to the latest Verizon strong-arm tactics to derail approval of the Consensus Plan. I left a message on your voice mail as well as this issue is so important.

Verizon, who has changed their position at least 10 times will go to any length to stop this plan, even threaten the FCC. I have never seen such disregard for public safety and desperation on the part of any single company, it astonishes and sickens me. This is not what our country is about.

I also wish to address your recent meetings regarding the First Response Coalition. First, they are no official entity and when questioned will not provide any validation as to its constituency. However, I did meet with Gene Stilp, William Fox, Bob Stephens and other fire service representatives prior to their press conference and meetings with each of you. Gene Stilp is the ONLY public safety representative involved with this so called 'First Response Coalition'.

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

While well-intentioned, none of them had been engaged in this discussion until very recently. They were totally unaware of other public safety initiatives and once again a group misinformed. They also confused the issues (as written in their white paper) of radio interference and interoperable communications. They were also provided with half-truths and only part of the information. Specifically they were given the National Volunteer Fire Council's first letter but not their second clarifying letter and so on.

Commissioners and staff, I have met with the NVFC, Gene Stilp and others on this issue. Once they hear the full story they almost always change their position like that of the NVFC. I have also had my own personal experience where AT&T and Cingular met with me in opposition to the Consensus Plan with misinformation.

I write this urgent message as a request on the part of public safety that you move forward and approve the Consensus Plan so that the problem may be resolved for public safety once and for all. It is truly the only way that something will get started immediately.

I have been actively involved in the process for over a year. I am a 28 year veteran of the fire service both in volunteer and career capacities. I have served as a Communications officer overseeing public safety dispatch operations. I have served on the regional 800 MHz Public Safety Radio Project Team and presently serve as Governor Warner's First Responder Interoperability Working Group Chair. I also serve on the SAFECOM Executive and Advisory Group and the FCC's Network Reliability Interoperability Council Working Group 1d.

Please stand your ground on this one, lives of public safety and citizens are at stake.

With the sincerest appreciation, I am,

Charles Werner
Deputy Fire Chief, Charlottesville VA Fire Department 434.531.3504